

strictly descriptive.

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This is a report of data collected on Aruban folk medicine - its variety, use and the attitudes which surround it. It is the outcome of a five week summer session conducted by the City University of New York. I chose to study folk medicine for reasons of curiosity and practicality. Being of a background not familiar with herbal medicine and living in New York where fresh herbs are not available, I was interested to learn of folk cures; further, since medicine in one form or another is common to all societies and reflects other aspects of culture, such as religion, economics and family patterning, I thought the study of folk medicine would reveal important traditional and transitional patterns of Aruban culture.

To direct collection of data, definitions had to be established. Often this was difficult; in the case of the definition of an Aruban, informants I had considered Arubans did not define themselves as such, while others I did not think Aruban, thought themselves very much so. The following are the definitions I will use throughout the paper and, I trust, be acceptable to the people who have been so helpful in my collection of data: an Aruban - one who was born and had one parent born in the Netherlands Antilles, speaks Papiamentu as his first language and has lived in Aruba for at least 10 years; folk medicine - ecologically supported plant medication and its administration. (Although folk medicine on Aruba does entail the use of animals, this study will cover only the use of plants.)

Specific informants were selected by their reputed knowledge of folk medicine, their experience with modern medicine in relationship to folk medicine (such as doctors) or their ethnographic knowledge of the island. General informants were selected by their proximity of the moment. Although this latter category may sound artificial and confining it was not. Upon mention of the Aruba Research Center I had access to government records and personnel. Private cars and public transportation were easily accessible and I could travel where I chose.

The first few informants were asked what plants were used medicinally, how they were used, if they themselves used them and whether they could direct me to others who use them. Answers to these questions gave me a familiarity with the subject matter, increased my contacts and allowed for more directed questioning. Additional questions elicited attitudes toward medical doctors and their medicines, and reasons for their choice of doctor or folk medicine.

Not all informants were asked the same questions due to time limitations and the availability of the informants. Nor were all questions answered. Since some informants spoke only Papiamentu, questions and answers had to be translated, therefore, accuracy and directness of such interviews can only be assumed.

The collection, classification and intended chemical analysis of medicinal plants solved the "anthropologists' plight" of ethnocentrism for me. These procedures legitimized my analytic background and enabled me to work more comfortably in a culture with which I was unfamiliar. Analysis will be

were people
reluctant to
talk about
some things
if so - that
is why

did it
solve all such
problems?

used as a check as to which is more effective in treatment - the medication itself or the psychological set of the patient. Upon knowledge of the intended analysis informants responded openly in their answers. Some said that medical doctors could learn much by studying Aruban remedies and were proud that their opinions were being sought; others were reassured that I was not a government agent and spoke to me on subjects they said they would not otherwise have discussed.

Fourteen Arubans were asked if they knew of plants used medicinally on the island; all responded affirmatively. When questioned if they themselves used the plants, all but two answered positively. (These two were among the three informants who had attended college.) From all informants the names of 52 plants were collected, with 95 uses. Not one informant mentioned all 52 plants nor all 95 cures. Many said they had not heard of certain plants being used medicinally and others were not even familiar with the plants' names. Some informants contradicted others' use of plants; one informant said that a tea made of a certain herb was not a refreshment as another had said, but rather a poison.

In all cases the greatest knowledge and use was attributed to "old ladies" and "Indians." To one informant "old lady" meant over 90 years of age. Government statistics, as of December 31, 1966, recorded 17 women 90 years of age or older. To others "old lady" meant the oldest living female member of a family. "Indian" to all informants implied one who new and whose family has lived in the kunucu for many generations;

he works land, is poor and has been less affected by technology than the rest of the population.

When queried on their personal use of doctors as opposed to folk medicine, answers varied. I have categorized informants' initial answers, modified by further conversations; e.g., one informant said he used only doctors and their prescriptions. While I was talking with him a business colleague asked, "Don't you use seda for cuts?" He answered, "Oh, seda, yes. But Mary wants to know about folk medicine." Initially I would have placed him in the category of "Exclusive use of doctors." This later discussion modified his position to me so I have placed him category 2. The categories of responses and the number of respondees in each category appear below:

1. Exclusive use of doctors and their medicines: 2
2. Predominant use of doctors and their medicines, occasional use of folk medicine, such as for minor cuts, sore throats: 4
3. Predominant use of folk medicine, occasional use of doctors and their medicines for such cases as childbirth, apparent and known severe diseases such as pneumonia: 3
4. Dependency upon folk medicine, use of doctor only in extreme cases, such as severe accidents or ailments that do not respond to folk remedies: 3
5. Exclusive use of folk medicine: 2

Both informants who denied personal use of folk medicine had fathers born outside the Netherlands Antilles who had been educated to use doctors. One informant had had all his formal schooling in England. The other associated with the children of wealthy merchants, and of whom had spent time in

the United States. He thought himself too modern to use folk medicine, although his Aruban maternal grandmother grew and used herbs herself.

Those who use folk medicine now also used it as children. Remedies were administered by either the mother or the oldest woman living with the family. Confidence was expressed in the use of remedies taken in childhood and cures directly experienced to work. Hesitancy was expressed in trying folk or doctor medicines recommended by those outside the immediate or extended family. Traditionally the only people consulted outside the family were those thought to possess great knowledge and recommended by the family.

Respondants in category two had all used folk medicine as children. Its use now has been modified by different factors. One respondent is an employee of Lago. He said that when he is sick if he does not attend a medical doctor he cannot receive sick pay. His mother and aunt sell herbs in the market in Curaçao; when he goes there and becomes sick, they treat him with herbs. The man of whom I made earlier mention in connection with Seda is a college graduate in a tenuous government position subject to political change. He speaks fluent English and aspires to greater political significance. In my opinion, he initially denied personal use of folk medicine to raise my esteem for him, to think him modern. When his colleague questioned him on his use of Seda, he appeared embarrassed.

A third respondent is 19. Her mother uses folk medicine now and gave it to her when she was a young girl. When at home

her mother still gives her plant medicine. At school she has been taught that diet and rest are the best cures for sickness. As a result she is ambivalent in her personal choice of folk or doctors medicine.

Respondents of category three all grow their own medications. All said they dislike the impersonality of doctors and use them only when they must. One informant is allowed free government doctors and prescriptions but attends a doctor only once a year to retain this privilege. Another informant's first experience with a doctor was the delivery of her second baby. Her first had been delivered at home and shortly thereafter died. She attended a hospital for her second delivery hoping that modern medicine was better than her mother's and grandmother's. When her second baby died, again soon after birth, her hopes dwindled. Now she too is ambivalent in her use of medicines. She grows her own plants and can afford doctors' medicine, although she thinks it expensive. Her choice of use is determined now by experience; if she believes she or her mother can prepare effective remedies at home, she uses them; otherwise she consults a doctor.

Respondants of category 4 also grow their own medicines. Mrs. R. is 58 and was taught plant remedies by her grandmother, a midwife. She believes doctors are not knowledgeable in certain matters and administers her own cures along with doctor prescribed ones. Last year when her son was injured in an automobile accident, she immediately gave him a mixture of *alg*, vinegar and salt to counteract internal damages. Since the accident

did not give him such a formula and he recovered with no internal damages, she attributes his present good health to her mixture. Mrs. H. is in her fifties, married and with no children. Neither she nor her husband has ever suffered from a disorder that has not responded to her medicines. She is not opposed to seeing a doctor but finds no need. F. O. and his wife use plant medicines for themselves and their children. He uses only remedies that he has seen work. During the Second World War he worked for three years with an army doctor. He told the doctor about the medicines of Aruba and was abashed when the doctor showed no interest. Later he was told by another doctor that plant medicines cause unwanted side effects. He still uses plant medicines, although he worries about his red blood cells.

more data on culture contact

Mrs. E. R. (78) and the curiosa of Noord (85) are the only respondents who said they rely exclusively upon folk medicine. Mrs. E. R. was taught folk medicine by her mother, who was, as an interpreter told me, a nurse. She lives with her children and grandchildren in the kharucu. They appeared poor - the children wore torn clothing and the house was small. She treats them only with her medicines which she grows and sells. The curiosa of Noord, one of the last women with great attributed curing powers, refuses to talk with anyone she does not know for fear that she will be imprisoned by the government. I was taken there by Mrs. H. and F.O. At first she denied any knowledge of plant cures. After F.O. joked with her and recalled past instances when he had invoked her help she began

to talk. She attributed her curing powers not only to her medicines which she grows herself but to her prayers. Although she told of some of the plants she uses, she would not reveal her prayers. She said they were not church prayers, but special healing prayers, taught to her by her grandmother, also a curioso. She said she would tell them only to a person of her choosing to carry on her work when she was ready to die. She was suspicious of doctors whom she said wanted to learn her prayers to be able to cure people as well as she did. The psychological setting she presented was an important aspect of her work. She dressed entirely in white. She wrapped white cloth around her forehead and covered her head with a white scarf. Although her house had electricity, the room in which she received petitioners was lit by candle light.

When informants were asked which they thought young people use most of the time - doctor or folk medicine - most replied doctors. Explanations of this were based on increased experience and changed family patterns. One informant viewed young peoples choice as the result of lingo. The introduction of this oil refinery to Aruba has allowed young people economic independence of their families. Along with the independence of living alone, they are not as dependent upon their families for medical aid. They have access to medical doctors and use them. They have become unfamiliar with folk cures and no longer need them. Another informant said Arubans no longer trust their plants; part of this was explained as the result of doctors discouraging their use and part as the result of increased rainfall, which

makes many believe their plants are not as strong now. Another informant said the young people do not know how to combine plants, and that without this knowledge plant remedies could not cure.

There is also numerology involved in Aruban folk medicine. Some said plants are to be used only in odd numbers; an odd number of ingredients are to be used, washed an odd number of times and administered on an odd number of consecutive day. I was warned by one person that the combination of two was to always be avoided, although she declined to tell me why. Data received from an Aruban ethnographer did not discriminate against the number two; remedies tape-recorded by several of his informants used the number two frequently. To some, the number to be used with new borns is six. Babies who develop yellow spots upon birth purportedly do so as a result of drinking amniotic fluid. If they are given anisette every day for six weeks, the spots will disappear. Also if given anisette every day for six weeks and not taken from the house, they will not later develop asthma. One woman attributes the present high incidence of asthma on the island to doctors' advice not to administer anisette to infants. For mothers who have just given birth, six weeks is also the preventive number; they will not become deaf if they put cotton in their ears, nor develop varicose veins if they bathe their feet in cold water for six weeks after giving birth.

Although specific historical data were asked each informant, such as what plants were used and how, the questions

about attitudes varied from individual to individual in accordance with their psychological set and the level of empathy established. In some cases questions were not answered. I believe, however, there are certain conclusions and inferences that can be drawn from data collected.

The observed and attributed knowledge of women about folk medicine and their roles as diagnosticians and dispensers of such place them in a powerful position within the traditional extended family. This can be seen in the case of Mrs. R. whose married son does not live with her but to whom she gave her own medicine just before he went to a hospital as the result of an auto accident. It should be noted, however, that the changing living pattern due to the economic independence of younger family members has lessened the traditional matriarchal authority.

From the divergence of knowledge and use of plants from informant to informant of similar age and family background it can be inferred that the making and dispensing of medicine is an intrafamily phenomenon. This non-standardization of medicine might account for some Arubans changing from exclusive to partial use of folk medicine. If medicine is not standardized, treatment and cure will be random; if the remedies do not work for everyone, there will be a need for some to find new modes of treatment.

Adherence to folk medicine might be accounted for within the traditional patterns of consulting curers outside the family. Traditionally such advice was sought only in the most dire of physical and emotional circumstances when recommended by a family member. The role of the curioso

this is a point that could be expanded & documented

I think you could express this thought more clearly -

useless if you say select a doctor to go to if follows

is to cure by secretive means; her prayers and physical setting are important aspects of her ritual. The modern doctor is little different than his patients. He lives in an ordinary house, speaks a jargon that anyone may study and assumes no occult powers. Most doctors on Aruba limit their activities to physical rather than psychological ailments. But under one roof, the curioso advises one on both mental and physical problems.

Not only family patterning, but personal and cultural pride surround the current use of folk medicine. To totally abandon the use of folk medicine would remove an important status role for many people. I was given a bottle of stropi calbás (a cough syrup) by one informant. When I showed it to another informant she said it was no good and that I should try her formula which used less water. When I showed both bottles to a third informant, she said neither stropi was good and gave me a bottle of hers. Cultural pride was expressed to me by a government minister. Unlike his assistant who initially denied personal use of plants, the minister called me into his office to tell me of his experience with seda. Three years ago he was stricken by a severe case of tonsillitis. His doctor recommended an immediate operation. A woman relative suggested he boil three seda roots and gargle with the boiled water. He did and has not been troubled by his tonsils since. He reminded me twice in a half hour conversation with him to be sure to have the seda roots analyzed in New York.

Continued use of folk medicine may be attributed to economics as well as to cultural patterning, as is illustrated

by this apocryphal story: An ailing Aruban woman, receiving no cure from a doctor, sought the help of an Indian. He cured her and she returned to the doctor to demand her money back. The doctor brought suit against the Indian and had him jailed for fifteen days. Later the doctor's wife became sick. He could not cure her, nor could the doctors to whom she went in the United States. As a last resort, the doctor asked the Indian for help. When his wife was cured, the doctor asked how he might repay the Indian. He replied, "You have already paid me with 15 days in jail." Among the curiosos and herb sellers, recompense is determined by one's ability to pay. Although there are provisions for government medical aid to the indigent, informants spoke of much red tape one must go through in order to obtain such services. Most of those who could qualify for free medical aid prefer to use remedies and modes of administering them with which they are familiar and trust.

The story illustrates better, I think, the kind of materialist revenge the traditionalist can get on adherents of modern technology - triumph through martyrdom and all that -

but the point of economic factors in the retention of herb medicines is well-taken and you could use some of your data on class background of the respondents to show this.

Does the use of herbs tend to go with more adherence to other traditional cultural patterns?

Appendix

Plants and their Uses

+ Aloë (Aloe sp.)

1. Asthma - whip egg white, add sugar and aloë juice, drink;
or wash white part of aloë 7 times, cut, cook with
sugar and drink
2. Ulcers - whip egg white, add sugar and aloë juice, drink;
or wash meat, add water, drink
3. Sprains or infections - cut and roast white meat of aloë,
wrap it around the hurt area, it will reduce swelling
4. Laxative
5. Bruises and "blood on bone" - wash meat 3 times with water,
put on sore area
6. Abort - put aloë juice in wine and drink
7. Young children who cannot urinate - place 5 flowers of aloë
and 7 pieces of paprika in a pinch (a measurement) of
and boil to half (al mushi); wet cotton with the
solution and rub the child; after a few days the child
will be well
8. Headache - cut out the white meat and wash it 4 or 5 times
with water. Wrap it in 2 pieces of cloth and put it
behind the head. (Never put it on the forehead or
on the front of the face because it will hurt the eyes)
9. Squeezed finger - heat it and put it on the finger; in
2 or 3 days the finger will be allright

+ Anglo or Wanglo (Tribulus cistoides)

1. Teething - wash roots, rub on gums to accelerate tooth
eruption
2. Teething when accompanied by vomiting - peel off green
outside part of root, wash it and put in a glass of
cold water. When water turns yellow give it to
the baby to drink.

Anisette

1. Yellow spots of newborn - drip it into baby's mouth
2. Prevention of Asthma - administer to newborn in the above Cashew once a day for six weeks

* Basora pretu (Cordia cylindrostachya)

1. Menstrual cramps - drink a tea made of the leaves
2. Abortion - use above in excess

+ Betunika (Melochia tomentosa)

1. Menstrual cramps - boil leaves and roots, drink (use just before or during menstruation)
2. Irritating rash - boil entire plant, cook, drink
3. Child's fever - boil leaves, drink

Bitter cane

1. High blood pressure - slice and fry or stew

+ Bonchi strena (Parkinsonia aculeata)

1. Coughs - put a few leaves into water, when water has boiled down add egg yolk and brown sugar. Drink

Bruska (Cassia occidentalis)

1. Tephis fever - make a bed of leaves; lay child on it; the fever will be drawn out

Galbás (Crescentia cujete)

1. asthma, coughs, colds - boil galbas in 3 cups of water, strain; to strained juice add olive oil, sugar, garlic, and cinnamon; boil until mixture becomes thick like honey; give 1 small spoonful to a baby, 1 large spoonful to an adult, once a day
2. Colds - boil betunika, kokolodi, tanshi, sangura, palu di sia blancu, yerba di coneu machu, anisette, muscanut and cinnamon, pinch of salt, sugar; mash meat of aloe blancu and galbas; strain; Next day combine both mixtures and boil again

3. Thrush (sprijt in Papiamentu) - grind a small calbas (green not ripe); strain it and take seeds out; dip a cloth into the strained juice and pass it over the mouth of the baby; then dip another cloth into honey and pass it over the baby's mouth; Use 2 times a day and continue until the bumps disappear

Cashew bark

1. Belly pains - boil, drink

Cawara (Cordia alba)

1. Better blood - boil the yellow flowers and drink the tea; used by mothers after giving birth

Coconut

1. Diarrhea in children - give the child the coconut milk to drink; then grind the coconut and boil it in fresh oil; give the child a small spoonful of oil for 2 or 3 days

Galinja (a local celery)

1. Diuretic

+ Karpata (Runcus communis)

1. Coughs - rub oil on chest
2. Toothache - combine its oil with coconut oil and rub on gums
3. Mumps - place leaves on swollen glands and tie them with cloth

+ Kokoledi (Heliotropium curassavicum)

1. Jaundice or gall stones - boil leaves, drink the tea
2. Liver bile - pour hot water on leaves until the color of water changes; drink the water

Kokorobana (Tournefortia gnaphalodes)

1. Dysentery, gall bladder, inflammation of stomach and kidney - wash bark, boil, drink
2. Several wounds - boil, drink the water; dry a leaf in a pan;

grind into powder; rub on the wounds; it will burn but heal the wounds

Kwihi (Prosopis juliflora)

1. Strained muscles - wrap strips of wood from inside branch around strained area
2. Gas - place bark on outside of stomach

Lemon grass

1. Colds and fevers - boil leaves and drink the tea

+ Magdalena Blanco

1. Sugar in urine (not severe diabetes) - boil the root and drink

Maishi di rabu (Lippia reptans)

1. Bladder stones
2. Pneumonia - grind it and boil to make a porridge; sew it into 3 sacks made from men's pants; place one on the chest, another on the back and the third on the back of the neck

+ Maishi grandi shimaron (Commelina virginica)

1. Stops continuous urination - boil and drink; it will cause one to urinate excessively for one day and then normally

+ Malohi

1. Fever, nausea, and colds - boil leaves and drink

Mango

1. high blood pressure - drink leaf tea
2. Postema (boil?) in chest - boil 3 leaves in water and drink

Mata coomles (Lithophilia muscoides or Ammannia latifolia)

1. Abort *recipe?*

Mata di lechi

1. Diabetes - boil in water until water changes color; drink a glass 3 times a day for 9 days

Palu di diablo

1. High blood pressure - boil leaves and drink the tea

Nutmuskát

1. Pneumonia - warm up sweet oil with some white onion; add nutmuskát and mix to a plaster-like consistency; put it on the sick person's chest

+ Palu di sía blancu (Bursera simaruba)

1. Child's cold - break leaves, stems and boil; cool; drink
2. Coughs - scrape and wash 3 pieces of a stem; boil; drink

Papaya (green)

1. High blood pressure - boil, mash and drink; 1 glass 3 times a week.

+ Pasota (Chenopodium ambrosioides)

1. Intestinal worms - take in morning before standing up, otherwise the worms will not come out

Potato

1. Eye ache - slice 2 small or large potatoes; place on eyes and tape them there; the pain will go

+ Pishi canu

1. Tuberculosis - wash, and cook the plant and drink it; or add sugar to make it a syrup and drink

Promenté (hot pepper)

1. For a big child that cannot urinate - boil a leaf of it; then add 5 leaves, seeds, branches of a watermelon and boil again; give it to the child to drink

+ Rabu di Cabai (Tournefortia volubilis)

1. Coughs and colds
2. Refreshant - boil stems and drink

3. Gas -

4. Cleansing agent for after birth - use in conjunction with yerba salu, boil and drink

+ Ratone (?)

1. Fever - spread on matress; it will draw out fever as the person sleeps on top of it
2. Colds, especially of children - boil leaves, cool, drink

+ Sangura (Hyptis suaveolens)

1. Increase appetite - used dried it will cause vomiting and defecation

+ Seda or Flaira (Jatropha gossypifolia)

1. Sore throat and tonsillitis - boil 3 roots; gargle
2. Refreshant - boil leaves, drink
3. Heal cuts - rub milky juice of branch on sores
4. Rheumatism - boil leaves and soak feet in the boiled water
5. Diabetes - boil 3 or 5 tops leaves of a young bush in water to make a concentrate; use 3 spoonfuls of the concentrate to 1 glass of water; use no more than 7 or 9 days.
6. Ulcers - wash 3 roots; mash them; boil in 2 cups of water; drink first glass at full strength; then add water and drink throughout the day

+ Senneblar (Cassia obovata)

1. Laxative - prepare tea from the leaves and drink

+ Shogho (Passiflora foetida)

1. Irritation rash - boil entire plant and bathe with it
2. Jaundice

Siboyo (onion)

1. Fever - Boil the thin grass; put it in a bucket and bathe

child from head to toe; dry; then rub him with coconut oil and cover him with a blanket

2. Bad chest cough - fry 1 large onion in 1 mushi of sweet oil until it turns red; take the onion out; 2 times a day give the child 1 small spoonful of the oil; when the sun rises rub the child's chest with the oil; in the afternoon rub his chest with the onion wrapped in cloth

Skobia (Scoparia annua)

1. High fever - mix with hot water; pour in a basin and make a tent over it with cloth; put head into tent; fever will be drawn out

2. Coughs

+ Soursoop (Annona muricata)

1. High blood pressure - boil leaves, drink tea

Sweet basil

1. Colds

+ Tabacu di piscador (Tournefortia gnaphalodes)

1. Abort

2. Male genital erector - rub leaves on penis

+ Tanshi (Capraria biflora)

1. Coughs

+ Tebenki (Pectis febrifuga)

1. Palodismo fever - for adults make a strong tea and drink it daily until fever goes; for children make a syrup out of the tea by adding sugar and an onion. (malanor)

+ Tuna spanol (Opuntia wentiana)

1. Intestinal pain - Cut off spines, slice and put in water; when water becomes slimy drink it; it will act as a diuretic and laxative

+ Vong vong

1. Rheumatism - boil leaves, soak feet in it and massage legs with cloth that has been soaked in it

+ Weli shali (Crotons flavens)

1. Menstruation - wash 7 leaves, 7 times; put them into 1 pinch of water; let it boil 3 times and drink; take it 3 days before menstruation to prevent cramps and for 3 days after to cleanse onts system.
2. Nasil congestion - wash dried orage leaves and place them in the nostrils

Yerba di lechi (Euphorbia adenoptera)

1. Diabetes

+ Yerba di hold (Ocimum basilcum)

1. Colds and fever - make a tea of the leaves and drink it
2. Fever due to teething when accompanied by enlarged belly - mix the herb with Vle's Vapo Rub and coconut oil; rub it on the feet and cover with socks; fever will be drawn out
3. Thresh - rub tongue with a cloth that has been spread with the herb
4. Foreign substance in the eye - place a seed under the bottom eyelid; the seed will swell and pick up the substance
5. Stomach ache - boil leaves in 1 cup of water; drink

+ Yerba stinki (Datura metel)

1. To induce sleep, specially in one who is suffering from delirium tremens - put leaves in pan over fire; then place the leaves behind his head
2. Diarrhea and headaches

Wednesday, July 24, 1968, 6:00 P.M. I met a man who was fishing at B.A. Beach. I was attracted to him because of the large number of fish he had caught and I sat down beside him to talk to him about them. He introduced himself as Ernie Rodriguez, born in Panama, raised on Curaçao. He was about 50, a resident of Aruba and a salesman for Scott Paper Co. He sounded knowledgeable about the natural environment and talked freely about the fish, their habits, and his methods for catching them. I asked him if he knew about plants too, especially those used as medicine. He pointed to a nearby plant called tabacu di piscador and said it had a "special" use. The most commonly used plant ^{he} thought was seda. He boiled the roots and gargled with the water to cure amanda (the exact translation of which I never determined, except that it involved the throat). He has also boiled the leaves to make a refreshing drink and has used the sap to heal cuts. He promised to bring a seda plant from his home and we agreed to meet on Saturday.

7:30, no. 369, Serco Colorado. Yvonne Gums, the 29 year old cook, from Curaçao, saw me digging at a cactus spine lodged in my finger. She slapped me on the shoulder and told me to try a little kerosene. I asked if she knew many remedies, especially ones involving plants. She said she did and we agreed to meet and discuss them on Saturday morning.

Saturday, July 27, no. 369, Serco Colorado, 10 A.M. I met Yvonne as planned and she began to tell me about plant medicines. Basora pretu and sweet basil she uses most often; the former for menstrual cramps, by making a tea from the leaves and the latter for colds. She had heard that green papaya boiled and drank and bitter cane sliced and stewed were good high blood pressure, but had never had a need to use them. Nor had she tried tabacu di piscador which is reported to be used for abortion. She used seda as Mr Rodriguez did to heal cuts, but thought a brew made from the leaves not refreshing but poisonous!

She said she did not like doctors or hospitals but did attend a government doctor once a year to retain her free

medical aid privilege. She explained that those who work pay an income tax, part of which covers the medical expenses of the indigent. She relies on her plant concoctions most of the year and believes most people on island do too. Drugs she said are relatively new on the island. The man who opened the first drug store died only 4 years ago. The government she feels tolerates the use of native medicine except for tabacu di piscador when used for abortion and marijuana.

Saturday, July 27, B.A. Beach, 4:30 P.M. I met Mr. Rodriguez fishing in the same spot I had left him a few days before. He had brought the seda bush as promised and told me an additional use for it: boil the leaves and soak feet in it for relief of rheumatism. He also informed me that the locally grown celery available in Chinese stores is an excellent diuretic.

8:00 P.M., no. 366, Serco Colorado. Yvonne added the names of several more commonly used plants: lemon grass tea for colds and fever, ratonero under a mattress to draw out fever, and yerba di holá tea for colds and fevers. (I learned subsequently that the sweet basil she mentioned in the morning and the yerba di holá mentioned here are one and the same).

Wednesday, July 31, 12 noon, dining room of Hotel Central, Oranjestad. I lunched with John Merriweather, the landscape architect of the island. He was born on Aruba as were his mother and her parents. His father, however, was English and John had spent all of his school years including college in England. He said he had little knowledge or faith in native medicine although he knew its use was widespread. He mentioned seda was used for tonsillitis and tabacu di piscador (also called kokorobana) was used to abort. He called the waitress to the table and they conversed in Papiamentu. She then asked me in English if I would like to visit her mother in San Nicholas who knew a great deal about herbs and would be glad to talk to me.

Wednesday, July 31, 10 A.M., no. 370 Seroe Colorado,
 Daphne Buckley. Daphne is 53 years old and born on St. Kitts,
 B.W.I. She has been on Aruba for 23 years where she has raised
 her children and worked as a maid. Mrs. Bendix, her employer,
 had told me Daphne was drying on the roof some gourds she
 planned to use medicinally. The gourds were calabash (called
 calabás by Arubans). She makes an asthma medicine from them
 by boiling a calabash in 3 cups of water, straining it and
 adding to the strained juice olive oil, sugar and cinnamon.
 She then boils the mixture again to a very thick honey-like
 consistency. One plant makes one pint; one teaspoon to children,
 two teaspoons to adults once a day is her dosage. She claims it
 is also good for coughs of colds ^{also}. Another recipe good for asthma,
 as well as stomach ulcers uses aloë juice for its base. The
 juice is added to an egg white whipped with sugar, and the
 mixture drunk. Aloë used alone, cut, roasted and wrapped around
 a swelling reduces sprained muscles ^{and} draws out infections.
 Aloë juice taken only with water acts as a cathartic and if
 drunk with wine as an aborticide.

She has several remedies for lowering high blood pressure,
 an ailment of apparent concern to many of ~~the~~ informants. Daphne
 uses boiled green papaya drunk as a tea. She has also ~~drunk~~ ^{tried drinking}
 cloves of garlic in a cup of hot water. She has heard
 almond nuts are effective also and their skins clean the teeth.

The garden of the house was filled with useful plants.
 She pointed out a plant growing near the clothes line ~~and~~ called
~~it~~ black sage. A tea made from the boiled leaves she claimed
 relieved menstrual cramps. A cactus (called sweet prickly by
 West Indians and tuna español by Arubans) which was growing by
 the door she said was good for intestinal infections. It is
 sliced lengthwise, place in a cup of water in the refrigerator
 and drunk when the water becomes slimy. In the yard of no. 368
 she pointed out what is called "yellow flower" in St. Kitts.
 The leaves of which when crumbled and boiled in water and
 daubed on the legs and feet bring relief from rheumatism.

She said she preferred her medicines to those of doctors; ~~her~~
~~they~~ were handy, effective, and far cheaper.

Wednesday, July 31, 8:00 P.M., no. 362 Serge Colorado,

Dr. Dalhuijsen. The doctor, a man about fifty, was born and educated in Holland. He has been with Lago on Aruba for twelve years. I was interested in receiving a medical doctor's view on the continued use and effectiveness of folk medicine in the presence of adequate modern medical facilities. Dr. Dalhuijsen said the belief in medication is more important than the content of the medication. He has found different people using the same plant for different ailments and each being cured. The belief of the effectiveness of folk medicine is deeply entrenched in the Arubans. It is the woman who is the curer and dispenser of medicine and her position of power was staunchly established fifty years ago when many men had to leave the island to find work. According to the doctor, this power position and role of healer has not left the women, even though most men now work on the island. Those who most depend upon herbals he believes are the old, the poor and the Indians who live in the kanucu (the hinterland). He has tried to elicit information about folk medicine from his patients but has found them reticent, especially the Indians whom he suspects know the most.

Wednesday, August 7, 5 P.M., Paradera, home of Eugenia Ras.

I interviewed Mrs. Ras on the advice of Hector Martinez, a friend of Yvonne Gums. Mrs. Ras is seventy eight years old and an herb seller. She prides herself on her cures which she learned from her mother, a nurse. The herbs she grows in the garden which surrounds her three-room cinder block house. There appeared to be four generations at her home; some relatives sat inside and looked out the window, another stood at the doorway, a baby rocked in a cradle on the porch and three young children followed her around the yard. She was very willing to speak though the conversation ^{was} ~~had to be~~ half in Spanish and half in Papiamentu. She would hold up a plant, repeat the name several times and recite a recipe by pointing to the particular part of the plant to be used and holding up the appropriate number of fingers to indicate how many of each

part. The first plant she showed me was welisali the fresh leaves ^{from} which she decocted a tea to be drunk for three days prior to menstruation to prevent cramps and for three days after to cleanse the vagina. The tea was made by washing seven leaves and boiling them in 1 pirchi (about 1 cup) of water three times. Although some people added sugar to the tea she preferred not to. For cough medicine she combined both native plants (senneblar, kahi, nut muscat, ribaldo) with Epsom salts and boiled them at night. When the mixture settled, she ~~drained~~ ^{strained} it. She made this concoction quite often because Arubans have "bad blood" and get colds four times a year. She gathered a handful of twigs which were drying on the fence in the sun and pressed them into my hand. "angura, sangura", she said. I asked what it did and she said increased the appetite. I asked how, and she said, "Pa ariba, pa abao" (by vomiting and effricating) - ^{S/} a rather unpleasant way, I think, to increase the appetite.

I asked if she ever consulted a doctor. She said no, she was the doctor for herself, her family and many people on Aruba who came to buy her herbs and medicines. We made arrangements to meet on Saturday when I would bring a translator.

Thursday, August 8, 10:15 A.M., the home of Mrs. and Rosa Robles de Medina, 160A Brazil Street, San Nicholas. Rosa (38 years old) is the waitress I met at the Hotel Central. She spoke English well and translated questions and answers between her mother and me. Mrs. Robles was 58 and had learnt native medications from her grandmother, a midwife. She first outlined the most commonly used plants: seda (which she referred to as fleira) for sore throats and tonsillitis; kokorobana she claimed was not tabacu di piscador as John Merriweather had stated, although they both grow on the beach. The bark should be washed well before it is boiled to make a tea which is effective for treating inflammations of the stomach, kidneys, gall bladder and dysentery. She too suggested green papaya tea to reduce high blood pressure but warned against its potency. She recommended it not be drunk every day, but rather 1 glass three times a week. She also recognized

welisali as good for stomach problems but thought betunika better for menstrual cramps. A tea made from betunika leaves and roots is effective both before and during menstruation. For fevers she uses malohi and skobia. Malohi is most effective if the fever is accompanied by nausea; skobia when the fever is very high. Skobia she boils in water, makes a tent around the steamy decoction and inhales the fumes. For geelzucht (yellow spots) and gall stones she prepares a tea from kokolodé leaves. Rabu di cabai stems she boils, cooks and sips as a refreshment. She too uses aloë for ulcers, but suggests (one) ? drink the water in which the aloë meat has been washed. She also uses aloë for curing bruises and sore bones by washing the center of the leaf three times with water and placing it on the sore area. Sangura is used to increase the appetite but she adds sugar to counteract the bitter taste. There were several plants with which Mrs. Robles was not familiar, such as tanshi and korneo machu, which Mrs. Ras said she used regularly.

Much of our talk was devoted to the care of infants and parturient mothers. Mrs. Robles' grandmother had been a midwife and Mrs. Robles had assisted in many deliveries. To cleanse oneself after giving birth she suggested a tea concocted from yerba salé and rabu di cabai. She claimed that her grandmother passed a baby that had been dead for two days by doing this. She also suggested that drinking a tea made from cawara flowers eliminates the after birth and builds up the mother's blood. Special care must be taken of the baby; if he develops yellow spots it is indicative that he has drunk amniotic fluid and must be given anissette every day for six weeks. This dosage of anissette and not taking him from his home for six weeks will also prevent asthma in adulthood. She blames the current rash of asthma on the medical doctors who recommend children be taken outside immediately and discourage the administration of anissette. For recovering mothers she has found that staying in bed for eight days, wearing wool stockings and not stepping in cold water for six weeks ~~after giving birth~~ prevents varicose veins. Upon telling me this she pulled up her dress and turned around several times to show me her

legs - still with out varicose veins after bearing several children. Some she said become deaf after giving birth, but this can be prevented by placing cotton in the ears for six weeks after the baby is born.

I asked if either attended medical doctors. Both denied they did and told me stories explaining their mistrust. Doctors, said Mrs. Robles, say everything is caused by high blood pressure. A friend of hers consulted a doctor because of a pain in her cheek. She was told it was due to high blood pressure and given medication. A few days later when a boil formed and burst, Mrs. Robles and her friend were sure the pain was not the result of the blood! As the conversation continued it was revealed that her family had on occasion used doctors. Rosa had her first baby at home, but when it died soon after birth, she decided to have her second one at a hospital, which she did. Mrs. Robles' son attended a hospital last year due to injuries received in an auto accident. But before he went there she administered her own mixture of fresh egg white, vinegar and salt to counteract internal blows. His present good health she attributes to her medicine, not ^{to} the care of the hospital. The Robles can afford to use doctors but prefer their own medicines, most of which they grow in their yard.

Saturday, August 10, 9:30, San Nicholas to Paradera.

I picked up Hector Martinez in San Nicholas and drove him to Eugenia Ras' in Paradera where he was to act as a translator. Hector is about 30 years old and was born on Curaçao. He has lived on Aruba for four years where he worked at Lago. His mother and aunt sell herbs in the market in Curacao and treated him with plants when he was ill as a child and when he periodically returns. On Aruba though he must use medical doctors so that his illness may be verified and he can collect sickness compensation from Lago. He finds the prosperity brought by Lago a major cause in the changing attitudes ^{of} young people toward native medicine. The young can afford to live independently of their families and do not know or remember or need their parents' medicines. As we passed a sign advertising kwihi

tables, Hector told me that strips of wood from inside the kwihi branch were good for relieving strained muscles when wrapped around them.

Hector had only an hour to spare so that when we arrived at Mrs. Ras' I asked him to ask her what plants she used most often. Her favorite cough and cold medicine consisted of boiling together betunika, kokolodé, tanshi, sangura, palu di sia blancu, korneo machu and yerba di cerú, adding anisette, rut muscat, and cinnamon and boiling again, adding sugar, a pinch of salt, the mashed strained juice of a calbás, a white aloë and boiling again. Ratonero leaves she also used for coughs. She boils the leaves and lets the tea cool for drinking and for rubbing. The leaves and stems of palu di sia blancu she also used for colds, especially for young children.

Sunday, August 11, 10 A.M., 62 Tanki Leender. I was picked up at Seroe Colorado by a friend and the two teenage children of Fernando Orman who drove me to meet him in Tanki Leender. I had tried several times to make an appointment with Mr. Orman but found him very busy. I had heard that he and his five wives were knowledgeable about plant medicine. Mr. Orman is about fifty. He was born on Aruba of an Aruban father and Venezuelan mother. When he was eight, his father died and his mother went to Venezuela, taking Fernando with her. He returned to Aruba in his late teens to work with a doctor during the Second World War. He is an industrious and resourceful businessman who runs the garbage collecting concession at Lago, a lignum vitae table business and plans to buy a fishing boat for his oldest sons. He has bought houses for all his wives and supports them and his twenty six. I was driven to the house of his ^{latest} newest wife. We found him out back chasing some goats that had escaped. He soon joined us and lost no time in identifying and specifying the uses of plants or his property. Yerba stinki (which literally stank!) was dried over a fire, placed behind the head and used to induce sleep, particularly in the crazy and drunk. Welisali leaves were good for unstopping a clogged-up nose, if washed and placed in the nostrils.

The oil of Karpata when rubbed on the chest is good for chest colds and when mixed with coconut oil and rubbed on a tooth relieves a toothache. Betunika leaves, boiled, and drank as a tea is good for a child's fever. We then went into Mrs. Erasmus' house for refreshments. The house had four rooms, made of cinder block. There was a kitchen approximately 5 x 12' with a sink, refrigerator and cabinet; a living room about 10 x 12' was sparsely furnished with a small two-foot square formica table, two kitchen chairs, 2 wooden arm chairs, a television, and a crib. Two rooms were off the living room; one contained only a double bed, the other only a closet in which I saw several folded hammocks. Mrs. Erasmus has seven children by Mr. Orman; the oldest was seven, the youngest two weeks. They played and intermingled freely with Mr. Orman's legitimate children, Teodora and Luisito and by that time three more who had come over to spend the afternoon. We continued to ^{discuss} ~~about~~ folk medicine and Mrs. Erasmus added much information which was translated from Papiamento to English by Mr. Orman and Luisito. There was little difficulty in communication until we discussed the use of mangos. Mr. Orman said they were used when one could not breathe and had a pain in the chest. He explained the pain as the "white blood cells fighting and turning into pus." His formula for getting rid of them was to boil three long mango leaves and drink the water. His remedy he thought better than doctors' because his made you defecate the postema whereas the doctors' induced vomiting which he said could kill you. Mata di lechi a low ground mat plant that grows over the island he found effective against cataracts and diabetes. For diabetes it is boiled in water until the water changes color and is drank three times a day for nine days. Maishi grandi shimaron he uses to stop constant urination. A tea made from the leaves causes excessive urination for one day, but then urination returns to normal. When in the army he learnt to use sulfa guanidine for belly pains. On Aruba he found boiled cashew bark to be just as effective and uses it instead of the sulfa compound. He had many cures for children's ailments (as might be expected!). For the

fever and swollen belly that often accompany a child's first teeth, he rubs a combination of yerba di holé, Vic's Vapo Rub, and coconut oil on the feet and covers them with socks. He uses yerba di holé for thrush and mixes it with honey and rubs it on the tongue with a cloth. For teething children he mashes angle (wangle) root and rubs it on the gums to relieve pain. To make the teeth erupt more quickly he has the child drink a tea made from the boiled roots. There are several plants he uses which he has found in patent medicines. For irritating rashes he uses shoshori or betunika which he boils and daubs on the sore area. Permanganate which doctors prescribe he has found to contain shoshori. Senneblar leaves which he uses as a laxative he has found to be present in Epsom salts.

As with other informants Mr. Orman has a couple of cures for asthma. Aloë he washes seven times, cuts it and cooks it with sugar. He advised that it be taken for nine days when a person coughs up white things that look like spider eggs. He also suggested dried white dog feces which he referred to as flor di camina (flower of the road!). This is boiled and drunk. It is effective in relieving the symptoms but not the cause of asthma.

Aloë he also uses with a patent medicine called Robaber and Epsom salts to cure white spots caused by eating too much sugar. The mixture should be left outside for three nights and brought inside during the day to make it most effective. Mr. Orman did not know why this procedure was necessary, but thought it might involve the coolness of the evening air. He had other precautions about plant medicines, warning me not to gather samples by Lago because they were oily and advising me that plant remedies were most effective before sun rise because the plants were still asleep.

In the old days when transportation was slow and a girl might be sent on an over night errand, her father might remove her "sexology" by depriving her of food and water and placing her in a hammock for three days. Then if she were given a small amount of water and regurgitated a yellow substance

she was thought not to be "hot for a man". When the girl returned home she was checked by her father who looped a piece of cord around her neck. Where the looped end met the free ends he pinched the free ends. If the amount of cord contained between the pinched ends slipped easily over his daughter's head it meant the "she felt sexology plenty" and the starving had not been effective. The reason why the string would fit easily over the head of some one sexually stimulated is that that neck muscles are supposed to enlarge *once someone has been aroused.*

Sunday, August 11, 1:30 P.M., cave exploring with several Arubans. Christopher LeJeus, 20, laughed when I asked him if he used plant medication. Although both his mother and grandmother do, neither his 22 year old sister nor he do. He believes herbs to be used only by the old and/or poor.

Thursday, August 15, 2 P.M., Department of Culture and Education, interview with Ito Tromp, assistant minister of culture and education. Mr. Tromp is a graduate of the American University in San Juan, Puerto Rico. He is involved in collecting data from old people as to traditional customs and mores. In one of his interviews he collected the following information from Mrs. Hermana Ras of 227 Savaneta which I have translated from Papiamento into English:

blufeyn, postema (boil) - put hot water on the boil and tape it; squeeze it

keintura (fever) - boil an onion (the skinny green kind from outside); bathe the child with it from head to toe; dry the child, wrap him in blankets and he will sweat the fever away

pneumonia - grind maishi rabu grof and boil it in water to make a porridge. Make three sacks of old clothes and fill them with the porridge. Place one on the chest, one on the back and the third behind the neck.

- warm up some sweet oil with some white onion; add some nutmuskat and form a plaster. Put the plaster on the child. In 2 or 3 days he will be well

sakamento (vomitting that accompanies teething children) - fry an egg in sweet oil and sprinkle it with white rum. Roll it in cloth and tie it to the child's stomach or pulse. Reheat when cool.

sakamento - peel off the outside of an analo root and put it in a glass of cold water. When the water turns yellow give it to the child to drink.
 diarrhea - give the child the milk of a white coconut to drink. Grind the cococut, and boil it in fresh sweet oil. Give the child a small spoonful for 2 or 3 days.
 coughs - wash the white inside of an aloe seven times. Wet and bake a ripe calbas, cool, grind and degit it. Boil both the calbas and aloe with assorted herbs.

I asked Mr. Tromp if he used any of the above or other plants. He scoffed politely and said no. His colleague, Mr. Alders, asked if he didn't use seda. Ito reddened a bit and said he did.

Sunday, August 18, 10 A.M., Oranjestad vicinity. I was met in Oranjestad by Luisito Orman who took me to the home of an honorific aunt, Mrs. Modesta Hoek. She drove us to another house in Tanki Leender, owned by another wife of Mr. Fernando Orman. Mrs. Hoek who is about 45, was born on Aruba as were her parents and husband. She can afford attending doctors since her husband works for Lago and she supplements their income by importing and selling shoes from Spain. Yet she prefers native medicine about which she is quite knowledgeable and grows many plants in an herb garden. We walked about the fields in Tanki Leender, collecting and discussing several plants. The yellow-orange leaves of welisali she uses to decongest her nose. She has heard some drink a tea of it but she has never tried it. Boonchi strenu she uses to make a cough syrup by boiling the leaves and adding a beaten egg yolk and brown sugar. Senneblar tea is a laxative. Kokolodi aids liver bile if hot water is poured over it until the water changes colour and the decoction imbibed. Seda is good for ulcers if three roots are washed, mashed, boiled in 2 cups of water, and dipped throughout the day. For keintura palodismo (a severe fever) a very strong tea from tebenki should be made and drunk daily. For children a stropi (syrup) can be made by adding sugar and onion. Tanahi is good for coughs. Basora pretu for menstrual cramps and abortion. Bruska is effective against tephis fever if a bed is made out of it and the sick

person laid upon it. Bitter celery (the galinja recommended by Mr. Rodriguez) she too uses as a diuretic.

Mr. Orman joined us and gave me a bottle of stropi calbás (a cough syrup of a calabash base) that one of his wives had made. We drove to Mrs. Hoek's house at 10 Canoastrat and were joined by several of her neighbors. The conversation turned toward the supernatural and the company related stories they knew to be true by experience but did not understand. They told me of a tree on the windward coast called mananfa that gave people who slept under it strange dreams and swollen hands to those who cut it. They also told me that by placing a pergamino (sheepskin) on the ground that had been written upon with a stick, an animal would not wander and could be secured without being tethered. They also told me of the mal di oho (the evil eye). It could be cast by anyone, intentionally or not on anyone or thing. ^{It is} most affected young children and fields. The cure for children ~~was~~ to obtain a piece of the castespellers clothing; to boil it and give it to the child to suck on. To revive stricken fields an article of the caster's clothing, usually the hat, should also be obtained. It is placed on a pole and put into the field.

The conversation returned to more conventional ailments. Mr. Orman said pasota was the best treatment for worms and should be taken in the morning before standing up. Maishi di rabu was recommended by several for bladder stones. One woman who sounded quite authoritative told me never to use even numbers for combining or administering herb medications. If an even number could not be avoided, be sure never to use the number "two". She examined the stropi calbás Mr. Orman had given me and declared it had been made with too much water and would break its cork. She went home and returned with 2 bottles she had made - with saccarin, because she's a diabetic. She had discovered her diabetes several years ago by attending a Colombian doctor. She returned to him a few months after his diagnosis and amazed him by her recovery. She had been boiling 3 or 5 top leaves from a young seda bush and drinking

3 tablespoons of it in a glass of water. Although the doctor was impressed by her results he warned that it killed the red blood cells. The company agreed that it was possible to take too much plant medicine and it was best to rely on an old person who had seen the results of many medications. Mr. Orman had known people who were relieved of the ailment for which they originally took plant medicine but died from side effects.

To the list of plants were added palu di cis blancu for morning coughs, palu di diablo for lowering high blood pressure, yerba di holo for the stomach, tuna español to reduce swelling, and pishi canu for tuberculosis. The feces of tan-colored lizards were on occasion put on the cut umbilicus.

All agreed that the old people, who have the most knowledge of folk medicine, were afraid to talk for fear of government reprisal ~~of~~ their practices. I was told a story of a woman, not being cured by a Dr. Arends, went to an Indian named David Maduro for help. He cured her and she went to the doctor to demand her money back. He brought suit against Maduro and had him sentenced to 15 days in jail. Later the doctor's wife became sick. Neither he nor the doctors whom he consulted in the United States could help. As a last resort he evoked the aid of Maduro. The Indian was success in his treatment and when asked how much it would cost he replied, "You have already paid me with 15 days in jail." Although this tale happened 32 years years ago it was spoken of among the company as if it were a common occurrence.

At 6:00 that evening Mr. Orman, Luisito, Teodora, Mrs. Hoek and I drove to no. 20 BSR, Noord, to visit a curiosa (a healer). When we reached the gate only the three women entered. Mrs. Hoek hesitated because a dog was moaning inside it. But he did not move so we walked into the yard and onto the porch, where we sat on chairs which lined the sides. There were two girls ahead of us and a third talking to the curiosa in the house. The room in which the curiosa was conversing was lit by candles. She must have been speaking close to the candles because the light flickered with every word. On the porch there was an electric light which shown

upon a wall decorated with holy pictures, a stuffed kamin whose tailed flapped in the breeze and a faded advertisement for assorted biscuits made in Holland. The petitioner came out and one of the girls on the porch was her daughter and they left together. The other girl said she lived only a short distant and would wait until we had seen Mona Bucar. Her mother, she said had been taught the arts of healing and prayer by Mona.

The curiosa was dressed all in white. Around her forehead was wrapped a long strip of white cloth and over her head she wore a white scarf. Her dress reached the ground and beneath it a petticoat rustled. She was short, bent over and her face a mass of wrinkles. Her look was stern and she waited to be addressed. Three quarters of the room was filled with chairs, piled on top of each other. A mirror, hung on the wall too high to be used as a mirror, was shrouded in a pink gauze-like material. She sat in a Bentwood rocker and occasionally spat into a basin by her feet. Above her hung a framed photograph of herself, dressed in the same styled garb, but smiling benignly. Mrs. Hoek told her we had come to learn about her medicines. She denied any knowledge of medicines. Mrs. Hoek continued to talk to her gently and placed a guilder in her hand, but the old woman remained reticent. It was not until Mr. Orman entered and recalled himself to her that she became animated and talkative. She said her most unusual treatment was her prayers, but she could not tell them to us; they were secret and in a strange tongue. She also used herbs which she grew in her garden, but they not anything unusual.

Tuesday, August 20, Office of the Department of Culture and Education, 1 P.M. I stopped by to see Mr. Tromp to ask him if practicing folk medicine was in any way punishable. He assured me it wasn't. Mr. Boey, the Minister of Culture and Education, asked me into his office to tell me about his experience with seda. Three years ago when he worked alone in the Ministry, had a television program and many other time-consuming duties he contracted tonsillitis. His doctor said he must have a tonsilectomy immediately, but he desisted

owing to his many obligations. An old aunt suggested he gargle with warm or cold water in which seda roots had been boiled. In a fortnight of such treatment his tonsillitis had disappeared and he has not been troubled with it since. He does not use plants often, but is familiar with tebenki which is used to clean the intestines of vomiting children and wali shali for dysentery. I asked if he knew any curiosas and related my experience of Sunday to him. He didn't use them but had heard that haladors were better. Curiosas are reputed to use good and bad spirits, whereas haladors can be more trusted because they use only good spirits. Haladors are massagers, who principally help people who have problems with their arteries.

Thursday, August 22, no. 369 Seroc Colorado, 3 P.M., Ethel Guma. Ethel, the 19 year old sister of Yvonne, was also born on Curacao. She is better educated than her sister and planned to start college on Curacao in late 1968. She is ambivalent in her attitude toward native medicine. She has been taught in school that diet and rest are the best treatments for sickness but has found her mother's concoctions effective. She believes few young people know how to mix plants properly and to her, the effectiveness of herbal medicines is in their combination. She classified plants as follows: yerba - a grass, that does not grow too high; mata - plants with leaves that grow close to the ground; palu - a tree or plant with woody stem

Thursday, August 22, 8:30, no. 261 Seroc Colorado, home of Dr. Dalhuijsen. He outlined a few names of cures he had found on the island: karpata for fever, sheshori for jaundice, scobia for bathing children with fever, yerba di holé for removing particles from the eye hydroscopically, mata coplis and basora pretu used in excess to abort, rabu di cabai for gas, malohi for child's fever, kokorobana for chest pain, kwihi bark on the outside of the stomach for gas. He has found

that the young Arubans who work with him in the hospital as lab technicians, etc. use native medicines along with modern ones.

Sunday, September 1, 4:30, Mrs. Hoek's house in Oranjestad.

My last visit with the Hooks and Ormans was spent over a large meal discussing what we all planned to do in the future. As I picked up a coffee cup I winced -- I ^{hot} hit another cactus spine. Mrs. Hoek brought from the kitchen a dried cow's gall bladder. She told me to cut out a piece just large enough to cover the tip of a knife, hold it over a flame until malleable, place it on the pine and cover it with a cloth. Since the process took two days to work and I was leaving soon, she gave me the gall bladder and told me to try it in New York. I did and it worked!